

1-2 R.F.E.

TRANSCRIPT OF BROADCAST

By
Fulton Lewis, Jr.Station WGMS at 7-7:15 P.M.
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It seems too bad, ladies and gentlemen, for me to have to do what I'm about to do, but I don't seem to have any alternative because I do have to protect myself, and this once again involves misrepresentations on the part of the sponsors of the Crusade for Freedom, this time, regrettably enough, on the part of the usually responsible Los Angeles Times in Los Angeles, California. The Los Angeles Times has undertaken to have its newsboys circularize all customers on their carrier routes, subscribers, asking for truth dollars for the support of Radio Free Europe. I have huge stacks of these yellow solicitation slips which listeners in Los Angeles have mailed in to me indicating the subscribers to the Los Angeles Times are refusing in very considerable numbers to contribute.

Of more immediate interest, however, is an editorial which was published in that paper last Saturday entitled "Freedom Crusade Gains Stature." It then proceeds with an attack on me without mentioning specifically my name and says that all of the statements I have made "have been gone into without substantiation." I don't know who went into them but I am interested in the following additional paragraph. "Officials of the American Legion, strong supporters of the Crusade, made a minute study of the documents compiled by the columnist commentator and reported there was no substance to his charges. Most of the 76 fraternal, religious, veteran, and labor organizations supporting the Crusade have replied to the critic by reaffirming their complete faith in its conduct and accomplishment." Incidentally, before we go on I have received no such confirmation from any one of the 76 organizations. Then, there is a rather dirty line as follows: "A spokesman for the Crusade observed that he has to have issues with which to keep some sort of a hold on his audience, he is not fair and would rather have a windmill to joust with rather than no opponent at all." Now that, as I say, is the Los Angeles Times.

To my astonishment, I find another attack in a mimeographed sheet entitled "1958 Auxiliary Objective" issued by the Illinois president of the American Legion Auxiliary to her members in that state. It first refers to the broadcasting that I have done and says "Whatever his aim, he has succeeded in capturing the admiration of the Soviet press. In a statement given to those of us in attendance in the American Legion's National Security Commissions meeting held recently in Washington, D.C., Mr. Lee R. Pennington, formerly with the FBI and now assistant director of the National Americanism Division of the American Legion, said that after examination of proof submitted to his department by Mr. Lewis, he urged that the American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary continue their support of the Crusade for Freedom and Radio Free Europe."

Now, I have no wish to get into any controversy with the American Legion because I admire that organization tremendously, very tremendously, and I have fought many, many battles with it shoulder to shoulder and I expect to fight many more with them in the future, on their side. I mention this latter because obviously both the Illinois item and the Los Angeles Times item were inspired by the same source, whatever that source is. Obviously it is untrue that I have captured the admiration of the Soviet press. There's no possible support in fact for any such statement as that, and it seems too bad that the good lady in Chicago should have allowed herself to swallow this typically irresponsible slander by the Crusade for Freedom. It serves to demonstrate, however, just how reckless and irresponsible and untrue the statements and the propaganda of the Crusade are. That has been one of my greatest criticisms from the outset. If they are as irresponsible, as reckless, as this in the present connection, what reason is there to suppose that their operation of Radio Free Europe, and it is from Radio Free Europe that the Crusade gets most of its reply material, is any less reckless or irresponsible in its day-to-day operations.

But let's get on to the question of the Legion and its examination, it's alleged examination, of my material and the statement that the Legion representative reported that there was no substance to my charges. You note that the name was that of Mr. Lee Pennington, assistant director of the National Americanism Division of the Legion here in Washington. Now, I have known Mr. Pennington for many, many years and have worked with him very closely. He is a very fine, a very able, a very courageous man and from the beginning of

these reports on the Crusade for Freedom I have made my files and documentation available to him. His office is directly across the street from me and he has come to my office on several occasions and has diligently picked up every copy of each broadcast I have done on this subject religiously, but as far as examining any of our documentation is concerned, he has not, for the sole and simple reason that he is not asked to do so. He has expressed his desire to do so, but he has been tied up in other matters, has been ill for several weeks, and simply has not been able to get around to it. The Legion, of course, is on record officially as endorsing the Crusade for Freedom as the result of a resolution which was passed at its last national convention before I began this series and which must stand as Legion policy until its next convention; and all of this, I understand, but I want to make it meticulously clear that neither the Legion nor any representative of it has ever made an examination, even the most casual examination, of my files, or my documentation in this case, despite the statements of the good lady from Illinois and the editorial in the Los Angeles Times.

By way of proving that point, I have a letter over Mr. Pennington's own signature written within the last couple of days to a lady in the Middle West who sent it to me who had inquired as to what the Legion is doing in regard to the disclosures that I've made about the Crusade and Radio Free Europe; and in his letter, Mr. Pennington states the following over his personal signature: "We are delving into the angles of the charges and until such time as inquiries have been completed, the American Legion will make no detailed statement concerning Mr. Lewis' charges." This would seem to discredit completely the Los Angeles Times editorial and the statement of the Legion lady in Chicago inasmuch as Mr. Lee Pennington is the person who is supposed to have made the detailed study of my files. So once again the Crusade for Freedom has left its friends and supporters out on the end of a limb by its false and irresponsible Madison Avenue hucksterism.